

EXCERPTED FROM

MINUTES
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF YORK

Adjourned Meeting
June 24, 2003

6:00 p.m.

Meeting Convened. An Adjourned Meeting of the York County Board of Supervisors was called to order at 6:01 p.m., Tuesday, June 24, 2003, in the East Room, York Hall, by Chairman James S. Burgett.

Attendance. The following members of the Board of Supervisors were present: Walter C. Zaremba, Sheila S. Noll, Donald E. Wiggins, James S. Burgett, and Thomas G. Shepperd.

Also in attendance were James O. McReynolds, County Administrator; J. Mark Carter, Assistant County Administrator; and James E. Barnett, County Attorney.

ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS: LANDSCAPING PROVISIONS

Mr. Carter outlined the proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance regarding the County's landscaping requirements. He stated the proposals were based on maintaining the same tree planting ratios that are in place now but with added flexibility. They reduce the number of shrubs required, increase the credits available for planting larger trees, and increase incentives for preserving trees on existing lots. He discussed the preparation of landscaping plans and the criteria for requiring that plans be prepared by a professional.

Mr. Zaremba asked if requiring a professional infringed on a resident.

Mr. Carter explained the requirement would be used in situations where a site plan would have to be filed, such as a commercial or multi-family development, and would not apply to single family residential uses.

Discussion took place citing a particular shopping center and the problems navigating the parking lot due to overgrown and inappropriately located shrubbery.

Mr. Carter pointed out that the ordinance contained a long list of recommended trees and shrubs, but it does not distinguish the appropriateness of the types of plants to be used for various applications. The Master Gardeners recommend that the Board develop a list that is more targeted to specific applications, one that recognizes some of the limitations of certain types of landscaping in terms of the growth patterns, root characteristics, or susceptibility to wind damage. He stated a good example of what is needed is Henrico County's ordinance, and, working with the Master Gardeners, he would like to modify it for the County's use.

Chairman Burgett suggested that the trees and shrubs be planted in accordance with the ultimate size of the vegetation so that it will fit the area in the long run.

Mr. Shepperd voiced concerns over the trees not being large enough when first planted.

Mrs. Noll agreed with Mr. Shepperd, stating that when a business comes in, it needs to be attractive; and it would have to have plants that were sufficient in size and density.

Chairman Burgett indicated that staff should advise people not to over plant and to contact the Extension Office for help and suggestions.

Mr. Carter stated staff had basically kept the same tree planting ratio in the proposal; but in terms of shrubs, it had been reduced considerably. The ordinance also allows the use of perennials and ornamental grasses which had not been allowed in the past. He stated the revised proposal suggests that a credit system be used that is based on every 100 linear feet of yard area or every ten parking spaces in a parking lot.

Mrs. Noll asked how the proposed plan compared with those of neighboring jurisdictions.

Mr. Carter stated comparisons were done two years ago, and York was on the low end of the spectrum. He then provided a chart that summarized the credits being offered and discussed the credits should trees and shrubberies die. He then discussed the transitional buffers and compared the current requirements to the proposed changes. He cited examples of landscaped sites and provided comparisons of the current requirements and the proposed requirements.

Mrs. Noll expressed her approval to group buffers aesthetically, and she stated it would give greater visibility to signage and still allow them what they need to see.

By consensus, the Board agreed to send the proposed changes to the landscaping provisions, along with the changes in the parking and signage, to the Planning Commission for its review and recommendations.